



"The Importance of Merit Accumulation for Realizing the Ultimate"

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Much has been written in Western scholarship about the role of reasoning for realization of the ultimate in Nāgārjuna's works but the role of merit accumulation has rarely been discussed. Sometimes the issue is omitted due to researcher's concern with logic and consistency but often is deliberately ignored as unimportant. This is peculiar since, in *Ratnāvalī*, Nāgārjuna goes at length in explaining that the great path of enlightenment consists of merit and wisdom and, in *Catuhstava*, gives central place to generating merit through worshipping the Buddha.

This paper will take a closer look at the role of merit accumulation in *Ratnāvalī* and *Catuhstava* with focus on its significance in bridging the gap between the conventional and the ultimate and discuss the relationship of the doctrine to the one presented in his analytical works, particularly *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*.